



# Teen Talk

***What you should know about contraception!***

Volume 3, July 1999

## Know the Facts TRUE or FALSE

### **Everyone's 'doing it.'**

FALSE...Everyone's not 'doing it.' Four out of 5 teens under age 16 have never had sex.

### **Most teens who get pregnant or get someone pregnant want to be parents.**

FALSE...82 percent of all teen pregnancies are unintended.

### **A girl can't get pregnant if it's her first time.**

FALSE...If a girl has begun her menstrual cycle, she can get pregnant if she has sex. It's important to know that the menstrual cycle begins before the menstrual period.

### **Pulling out is not a very good way to keep from getting a girl pregnant.**

TRUE...Some semen leaks before ejaculation. You can get a girl pregnant even if you withdraw (pull out). And it's difficult to withdraw just before ejaculating (sometimes called 'cumming').

### **Contraception is the girl's responsibility.**

FALSE...Contraception is both partners' responsibility. Every baby has a father and a mother, and both boys and girls can get STDs, including HIV/AIDS. You should talk about contraception with your partner and decide which method to use.

### **If you use contraception, you can still get pregnant or get a girl pregnant.**

TRUE...Nothing is 100% sure except abstinence.

### **All contraceptive methods protect against STDs, including HIV/AIDS.**

FALSE...Most contraceptive methods do not protect against STDs, including HIV/AIDS. But latex condoms do provide protection. Without a condom, STDs can be passed from person to person during vaginal, oral, or anal sex. While some STDs are curable, others are not. Even when another form of contraception is used, it is important to also use a condom to protect against infections.

## The Basics

### **What is contraception?**

Contraception (also known as birth control) refers to the many different methods of preventing pregnancy. While it is important for those who are sexually active (having sex) to use some method of contraception to prevent pregnancy, it is crucial to understand that not all methods of contraception protect against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). The condom is the only contraceptive method that can provide protection against STDs, including HIV/AIDS.

### **Who needs contraception?**

Anyone who has sex and doesn't want to get pregnant or get someone pregnant. Any time you have sex, there is a risk of pregnancy. Not having sex—abstinence—is the only 100% sure way to avoid pregnancy.

### **Are some methods of contraception better than others at preventing pregnancy?**

Yes. Some contraceptive methods are more effective than others. To be effective, whatever method you choose must be used correctly. Always read and follow the package instructions. (See effectiveness table on reverse side.)

### **Is the condom the only kind of contraception for males?**

No. But the condom is the most common method used by young males. Remember, the condom not only protects you against pregnancy, it also protects you against HIV/AIDS and other STDs.

### **How do I decide which method of contraception to use?**

Each type of contraception has advantages and disadvantages. Your health care provider can help you decide which method is best for you. Remember, even if you are using a reliable method like the pill, the condom is the only method that protects against HIV/AIDS and STDs.

### **Do I need a prescription to get contraception?**

Condoms and spermicides can be purchased without a prescription, but other methods require one. Even if you use a nonprescription method, it is a good idea to see a health care provider on a regular basis.

# Contraceptive Methods

## Hormonal Methods

*Hormonal methods prevent pregnancy by interrupting the normal process for becoming pregnant. Hormonal methods do not protect against STDs.*

**The Pill**—A pill for women that must be taken at the same time every day.

**Hormonal Implant**—Small capsules inserted under the skin of a woman's upper arm that release small amounts of a hormone.

**Depo-Provera**—A hormone shot that is injected into a woman's arm or buttock every 3 months.

**Emergency Contraception**—Hormonal pills that are taken within 72 hours of unprotected sex or method failure (i.e. the condom broke or you forgot to take your pill).

Emergency contraception is the only method that can be used after having sex to prevent pregnancy.

## Barrier Methods

*Barrier methods prevent sperm from reaching the egg.*

**Condom/Rubber**—A cover for the penis or vagina. Latex condoms are recommended for protection against STDs, including HIV/AIDS.

**Diaphragm/Cervical Cap**—A shallow latex cup which the woman puts in her vagina before having sex. The diaphragm is generally used with a spermicidal jelly or cream.

## Other Methods

**Abstinence**—Not having vaginal, oral, or anal intercourse. Abstinence is the only 100% effective way to prevent pregnancy and STDs, including HIV/AIDS.

**Spermicide**—A cream, foam, jelly, or insert which kills sperm. Spermicides do not protect against STDs or HIV/AIDS. Spermicides are more effective when used with a condom.

**Withdrawal**—Removing the penis from the vagina before ejaculation (cumming). While withdrawal is better than nothing, it is one of the least effective methods of preventing pregnancy.

**Natural Family Planning**—Not having sex during the 5 or 6 days of the month when it is possible for the woman to get pregnant. Specialized training is essential for using this method.

**Intra-Uterine Device (IUD)**—A plastic, medicated device which is inserted into a woman's uterus.

**Sterilization**—A permanent, surgical form of contraception that blocks the fallopian tubes in women (tubal ligation) and the vas deferens in men (vasectomy).

## Typical Use\* Effectiveness Table

The Pill	95%
Hormonal Implant	almost 100%
Depo-Provera	almost 100%
Male Condom	79%
Diaphragm/Cervical Cap with Spermicide	80%
Abstinence	100%
Spermicides	74%
Withdrawal	81%
Natural Family Planning	75%
Intra-Uterine Device (IUD)	99%
Emergency Contraception	75%

\* Typical Use Effectiveness—How well the method works for the average person.

Sources of information/data: *Contraceptive Technology*; *The 1995 National Survey of Adolescent Males*; and *The 1995 National Survey of Family Growth*.

For additional copies, please contact: Office of Population Affairs Clearinghouse,  
P.O. Box 30686, Bethesda, MD 20824  
Phone: (301) 654-6190, Fax: (301) 215-7731, or E-mail: opa@tascon.com.